

Transylvania County Natural Area Inventory

TUCKER CREEK BOG Significant Natural Heritage Area

Site Significance: Regional

Quadrangle: Rosman

Size: 37 acres (25 in primary and 12 in secondary areas)

Ownership: U.S. Forest Service (Pisgah National Forest)

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES: This site contains a Regionally-significant example of Southern Appalachian Bog along with a fair example of locally uncommon Montane Alluvial Forest. A population of bog chickweed (*Stellaria alsine*) occurs in Tucker Creek, and a historical record for bog goldenrod (*Solidago uliginosa*) exists for this site but was not relocated. The open boggy wetlands here provide potential habitat for rare amphibians and reptiles.

LANDSCAPE RELATIONSHIPS: The site is located just south of Balsam Grove on Tucker Creek, approximately 0.5 miles before this creek flows into the North Fork French Broad River. Pressley Fields Road passes by the site and bisects the alluvial forest. Tucker Creek connects to the North Fork French Broad River and Bird Rock Falls, which is approximately 0.5 miles northeast of the bog. Other nearby natural areas include Spice Cove to the south along the North Fork and Bald Rock/Bruce Ridge, which is located approximately 2.5 miles north along Tanasee Ridge.

SITE DESCRIPTION: Tucker Creek Bog lies in a flat stream valley surrounded by low mountains. Several small tributaries merge at the bog and form a mosaic of wetland and alluvial habitats. A small Southern Appalachian Bog sits in the floodplain of the south side of the creek, where it mixes with meadow bog and apparently abandoned, beaver-impounded wetlands. A moderately mature example of Montane Alluvial Forest is present mostly along the creek itself and in the floodplain on its north side where it occurs intermingled with areas of Acidic Cove Forest. A small, possibly man-made Floodplain Pool with a small breeding wood frog (*Rana sylvatica*) population occurs in a disturbed wet woods on the edge of the site.

A medium-sized Southern Appalachian Bog is located in the back floodplain of Tucker Creek with a mixture of open, herbaceous sections, shrub zones, and beaver-influenced wetlands. Some trees such as red maple (*Acer rubrum*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), and white pine (*Pinus strobus*) occur on the edge of the wetland. American holly (*Ilex opaca*) is a common understory tree. A number of shrubs occur throughout the bog including mountain dog-hobble (*Leucothoe fontanesiana*), tag alder (*Alnus serrulata*), male-berry (*Lyonia ligustrina*), silky willow (*Salix sericea*), and silky dogwood (*Cornus amomum*). White meadow-sweet (*Spiraea alba*), an infrequently occurring wetland species, is present in the shrub bog. This bog contains some areas that are beginning to regenerate from beaver impoundment and inundation, as well as a fairly extensive open expanse of *Sphagnum* moss and wetland herbs. Some of these wetland plants include rice cut-grass (*Leersia oryzoides*), rushes (*Juncus* spp.), manna-grass (*Glyceria striata* and *G. melicaria*), goldenrods (*Solidago*